Vanderbilt's Place at Poissy

Where "Willie K." Makes Ready His Entries for French Turf Events, by Means of Which He Hopes Some Day to Reach the Head of the Racing World in the Country of the Gauls—An American Trainer and American Training Methods Installed in His Two-hundred-and-fifty-acre "farm" Near the Banks of the Seine.

Once Popular French Race-track Has Been Transformed by Millionaire American into Establishment Which Has but One Superior in the Country—Employs an English Jockey, but Is Not Making Money Out of His Costly Pastime—Owner Is Popular with the Neighboring Peasants and with the French Racing Fraternity.

By DEXTER MARSHALL.

Poissy-in-Eeine, Oct. 1.—"M'sieu Vanderbilt, 'e 'ave been 'ere a good many years," said the young English-speaking Poissy cabman, who drove me out to St. Louis-de-Poissy, William K. Vanderbilt's training headquarters near the town of Poissy some thirty-five miles, a little to the north of west of Paris. "I remember vare well when 'e come. I was small boy then. Every year since then 'e have been 'ere sometimes; 'e used to come from Paris in the train, but no 'e come toot, toot, in ees motor car.

"'E does not stay much about the town, no; 'e stay at 'ees place an' keep busy about 'ees 'orses. But everybody in Poissy an' in this neighborhood think 'e is vare fine man; 'e give much work to the men of Poissy an' other places roun' 'ere. Some years ago 'e 'ave employ 'undred, two 'undred men. 'E is—w'at you call it?—ha'l right? Ees zat eet?"

The Vanderbilt "farm," as it is sometimes termed by the Anglo-American colonists in Paris, is anything but a farm in the ordinary sense, since no appreciable part of the ground within its inclosure is devoted to cultivation. But it is big enough for a very respectable farm either in France or the United States, as it covers not far from 250 acres, while its soil is fertile enough to raise any of the crops which are produced on the smiling, hill-circled plain around it.

Instead of being planted to potatoes, or sown to wheat or oats, nearly all the area of St. Louis-de-Poissy is given over to horses, which its owner keeps in order to carry on his racing career in France, and neither money nor pains has been spared in the effort to make the establishment a model one. Frenchmen and Englishmen, as well as Americans, agree that the attempt has been quite successful.

High Fence Surrounds It.

The entire "farm" is securely inclosed, after the manner of the French, partly by a high wall, and partly by a stiff hedge, ten or twelve feet wide, that is re-enforced by a wire fence. Either hedge or fence would be difficult to pass; combined, they are practically impregnable. Yet, apparently, the lord of the domain does not rely upon them wholly to keep intruders out, for at various points he has displayed conspicuously the announcement:

"Ici il y a des pieges a loups," which, freely translated, means:

"Look out for the wolf traps."

So far as I know no one ever has investigated for the purpose of learning whether there are any traps in the hedge or not. There are no similar warnings on the wall. It is such a piece of masonry as only Frenchmen build; about nine feet high, of round-finished, buff stone, capped with brilliantly red tiles. It is so new and it reflects the light so brightly when the sun is shining that you can see it plainly from the hills miles away in every direction. The newness and the spic-and-spanness of the entire establishment are among the most distinguishing characteristics of St. Louis-de-Poissy. It is in a region not altogether devoid of other new buildings, to be sure, but where most structures are gray and black with age. At Poissy is the second oldest church now standing in all France, say the people there; it was built in the twelfth century, and although portions of it seem to have been restored, it looks quite as old as it is supposed to be.

Chateau Still Unfinished.

The Vanderbilt training farm is reached by a sandy cart track, which branches from the fine main road leading from Poissy to Meulan, both of which are on the River Seine. There are two entrances. Just inside the ornamental main entrance stands the new chateau—the cabman called it a "castle"—which Mr. Vanderbilt has had built for a residence when he chooses to occupy it, but which is not yet quite ready to live in.

While the owner of the place was in France in August, but attending the races at Deauville, Trouville, and other racing centers, Mrs. Vanderbilt was living in a pretty little red roofed white stone cottage just outside the yellow walls.

There are many who say that the training grounds at St. Louis-de-Poissy are the finest in France. As I haven't seen them all I cannot say whether this is true or not, but the establishment certainly is well planned and well kept up.

The entire inclosure is practically level, and the turfed course, with two long stretches, has a circuit of a mile and a quarter. The sand course, just inside the other, is perhaps a hundred yards shorter. One of the stretches of the turf course is quite five furlongs in length, which gives a chance for a long straight-away dash.

The turf on the outside course is kept in as good condition as the turf should be on the putting greens of a first-class golf course, although a bit longer. As turf never or rarely maintains itself in France the course has to be watered plentifully every day, water for that purpose being pumped from the Seine into a water tower upon its banks, about half a mile from the western boundary of the farm. Within the inclosure and near its eastern wall is another smaller water tower, which is connected with the first by underground pipes.

French Race on the Turf.

All the racing in France, as in England, is upon the turf. Consequently the more severe exercising of the horses at St. Louis-de-Poissy is done upon the turf course, the inner, shorter, sand course being reserved for the slower gallops. Inside the track there are twenty-two large paddocks, in which all the horses on the place can be turned out at once if it is so desired.

There are stalls for sixty-two horses, besides the six or seven "hacks." The stalls, which are very roomy and well ventilated, are located in stone stables with thick walls that insure coolness in the hottest weather ever known in the valley of the Seine. The stalls for the yearlings, of which there are thirty-five, are in what is known as the riding school. It is nearly or quite 600 feet long, and its inclosed and roofed-over track for the exercising of the yearlings, which surrounds the stalls, is about a rod wide. Five times round this track makes a mile, and its short turns are sharply raised on the outside.

There is nothing in the world, apparently, that William K. Vanderbilt likes better than to watch his horses at work under the direction of his trainer, William Duke. For some years Duke was employeed by Sir John Thursby, in England, where he helped introduce American training methods, as Lester Reiff and Tod Sloane introduced American riding. Duke succeeded Hughes as trainer at St. Louis-de-Poissy about five years ago. The stand from which the trainer and the owner watch the horses at St. Louis-de-Poissy rises one story above the riding school and commands an unobstructed view of both tracks, the sand and the turf.

Easy to Tell Speed.

Each track has posts at eighth-mile intervals—red for the turf and white for the sand—which serve the trainer in determining the speed at which the horses are going, and he calls for more or less speed as they are moving too slowly or too fast to suit, by means of signals worked from the stand. The exercising, of course, is according to the most approved American practice.

This is now accepted as desirable by practically all French racing men, most of whom have adopted it in full or in part, but at first they looked upon it with caution, not to say alarm. Even so late as five years ago there was much question as to its value, as the following paragraphs, turned into English "as she is wrote" by one of the men who do casual translation for American sojourners here, will show. The article from which they are taken was contributed by Jean Romaine to Le Sport Universalle Illustre for July 20, 1902. It will be noticed that M. Romaine found a few things to surprise him at St. Louis-de-Poissy besides the training:

"At the hour of our arrival," he says, "the work of the old horses has just been finished. We have before us the stable of the 9 o'clock horses. The men are dressed in blouses held together by belts, their heads covered with very broad straw hats of the entire American form, while attending to their occupations, giving us at the first step the impression that here we are not at Chantilly.

"The Yankee lad, or subordinate of the Yankee trainer, has quite a different bearing from that of the English lad. He is not striving to appear as a gentleman, and the entirely sportive trappings and accouterments, caps, serge jackets, breeches, and leggings of porkskins, were not found by us to be worn at St. Louis-de-Poissy.

"Contrary to the English, the Americans keep their horses as much as possible in the open air, and do not store them all day in dark and close stalls. At a distance we see them drawn up in battle array like a line of cavalry. One does not give in. We take advantage of this incident to inform ourselves.

Training Is Practical.

"The purpose of the daily exercise is not only to keep the horses supple, but also to make their character more steady and to get them into the habit of remaining in contact with their neighbors while they are under the orders of the starters. When at last all have been calmed down, order is given to break the line loose, and, to our surprise, the entire troop starts at a small, slow gallop, in one of the most picturesque, but also one of the most practical mix-ups. In the English stables the colts are seen in Indian file at from 75 to 150 feet one from the other. Evidently such a method is inspired by fear of accidents, but it offers the inconvenience of not preparing the horses for the brutal contact with others in the race.

Here it is estimated that the training should tend to educate the horse with a view to the hippodrome. In consequence one tries to give the horse during the exercise itself a lesson which shall be profitable for its training.

"It is a fact that the young colts go in playful way, but very calm, well placed, and under the full control of their riders, without the least disorder appearing in their close line. This training exercise and the entire light work are done on the sand. The rapid gallops are accomplished on the grass."

M. Romaine describes the training exercise at some length, laying particular stress upon the fact that the horses are left outside as long as possible after the work is done. "Before their return to the stalls," he says, "they are walked a long time, led by hand under sleve-like coverings which are spread over the entire horse, permitting the free access of air to the body and protecting it from flies. From time to time the animal is given a mouthful of water.

Great Care with Horses.

"I have been told that this dosing of the horse with the beverage is one of the tricks proving the superiority of the trainers. I admit my incapacity to discuss this question. The exercise, the walk, led by hand, the grooming, take at least three hours by the clock," he continues, with some wonder, "during which time the horses remain in the open. If this be not sufficient they are taken out again in the afternoon."

Summing up with regard to American methods of training, M. Romaine says that, saving the rule to keep the horses in the open as much as possible, the principle seems to be to treat each animal according to his temperament and to vary the method as occasion requires—"so many different horses, so many different ways of doing"—is the way he puts it. This is true of the Vanderbilt stables today, under Hughes. But to-day the under trainer is an Englishman named Platt, and he wears the "leggings of porkskin" and otherwise attires himself as men of his nationality and calling generally do. He is a highly competent man, however. He came here with Duke, the head trainer, and since their arrival, nearly all the buildings have been replaced by new ones; new waterworks, and an electric light plant have been put in, and the surface of the entire enclosure, which formerly was undulating, so that the tracks were not without grades, has been equalized and made almost as flat as a floor.

It is in doing all this work that the "one hundred, sometimes two hundred" men of Poissy, as stated by my cab driver, have been employed by the establishment to the gratitude and largely to the support of all Poissy and its environs. The building of the new "castle" has employed many local workmen, also. These men and the local tradesmen do most of their dealing with William K.'s secretary, Rutgers Leroy, the proprietor himself rarely coming in contact with them.

Employs Many Retainers.

In the summer when the races are on and the horses are away, St. Louis-de-Poissy boasts few employes, but at other times there are about thirty stable boys, besides other regular employes, such as the gardener, the concierge, and their underlings, and so on. The stable boys include a few French lads from the neighborhood, but there are several English lads, while here and there among them may be seen a "broad straw hat, entirely American." Bellhouse, the regular Vanderbilt jockey, succeeded Ransch, the American, last spring, and is English.

My visit to St. Louis-de-Poissy was made in midsummer, and, in consequence, the place was almost deserted by both men and horses. All the racing animals were at the tracks; the surplus stock had all been sold or sent to the big Vanderbilt breeding farm at Villebon; both Duke, the head trainer, and Vanderbilt were absent, and a Sabbath calm covered the place, both inside and outside the yellow walls. Only Platt was in attendance.

His house and Duke's, white-walled and red-roofed like nearly all the St. Louis-de-Poissy buildings, stands near a gate that is nearly a third of a mile further from the public highway than the entrance of state opening on the new chateau and its gardens and greenhouses. It might be better to say it does not open when the proprietor is away, at least it didn't open to me; but what I may call the "Platt Gate" stood wide open and bore no signs of warning about a "wolf trap," while its hospitality was equaled quite by the smartly got up little English under-trainer. He is as proud of the place as either Vanderbilt or his head trainer possibly can be, and likes to show the casual visitor about.

Amid Beautiful Surroundings.

Standing with him in the box from which "Willie K." watches his horses when they are being exercised, and looking northward, eastward, and westward, I was struck with the beauty of the surrounding section of the Seine Valley. St. Louis-de-Poissy seemed to be set in an amphitheater of low hills, on the sides of which a dozen or more villages were glistening in the sunshine, under the bluest of blue skies, partially covered with floating white clouds. One of these villages is Meudon, distinguished in his lifetime as the home of Zola, bequeathed to the nation by the great writer, and now being fitted up as a refuge for old folk who need assistance.

Every one of these villages has its queer traditions, dating back to the middle ages, and perhaps beyond. At Poissy, to the south, lived Meissonier, one of the greater French painters, during the larger part of the nineteenth century. His statue, surrounded by a square of stocky, thickly leaved trees, closely clipped—an audacious figure of bronze—stands in front of the ancient church of which the town is so proud.

St. Louis-de-Poissy, especially since its owner has built a "castle" within its walls, is now in the zenith of its glory, and this is recognized by the picture postal card publishers, who have issued a series illustrating the improvements. But it has a history dating back some years before Vanderbilt got possession of it. It was once a public racing course, and for some time it vied in popularity with other courses in the neighborhood of the French capital. But at the best it no more than held its own, and, later, partially because it was so far from the Poissy railroad station, its popularity dwindled, its receipts grew less and less yearly, its prizes were reduced, and finally it was closed. Then Jacques Hennessy took it and trained his horses there. After him Cammille Blanc, the famous French racing man, purchased it, in partnership with M. Mecle; they kept it a short time only, and sold it to the present owner.

Estate Grows Each Year.

It was a much smaller place then than now, having been added to bit by bit, almost every year, and the fact that only a part of the present 250 acres is protected by the famous buff stone wall may mean that "Willie K." intends to add still more acres to his domain.

The only training quarters in France that have cost more money than Vanderbilt's are those of Edmund Blanc, brother of Cammille, and manager of the Casino at Monte Carlo. His racing headquarters is at St. Cloud, adjoining the race track there, which was built by him originally to serve as a training track only. It has been one of the most important race tracks in the French system for some time now, however, and Edmond Blanc is one of the heaviest holders of race-track stock in the country to-day.

Those who should know say that while Vanderbilt has spent $1,000,000 upon his track near Poissy, Blanc has spent twice that much at St. Cloud. Including the public stands the track there has cost much more than the Vanderbilt tracks, and the same may be said of the training quarters themselves. Much costly art tile work is to be found in some of the stalls and other parts of the big stables at St. Cloud, but nothing so extravagant and really useless is to be found at St. Louis-de-Poissy.

His Stable Not Profitable.

Edmund Blanc makes his establishment very profitable, however, every year; Vanderbilt made money out of French racing for the first time in 1906, but has made little or nothing this year. To tell the truth, "Willie K." has not done so well this year as last; neither has Jay Ransch, the American jockey who left him last autumn after "a bit of an argument," thus closing an engagement of three years. Vanderbilt's present jockey, Bellhouse, the English lad, who rides the horses of other owners when not needed by Vanderbilt, has done very well, however, being second on the list of winning jockeys, which bears out the statement that Vanderbilt's horses were not up to the standard this season.

His three-year-olds all failed to make good. Second Sight, which ran second to Sans Souci II, in the Grand Prix de Paris, has not done anything worth mentioning since; Kadijah, who was in the second string, but still gave promise, also has failed to count for much. Schuyler, the best Vanderbilt two-year-old, and Northeast, another of his two-year-olds, appear to be coming on very well, however, and there is reason to believe that the multi-millionaire owner may fare better in 1908 than he has fared in 1907. His Maintenon and Prestige, which were the talk of all racing France last year by reason of the victories they won under Ransch's guidance, are out of racing completely for the present.

It makes little financial difference, however, either to Vanderbilt or Blanc whether they make money on the tracks or not. Blanc's pockets are kept full to repletion, quite independent of his winnings or losses as a racing man, by the constant stream of money from the uttermost parts of the earth that flows to him by way of the great gambling resort, where, as the French say:

"Noir gagne quelquefois—Rogue gagne quiequefois, mais Blanc gagne toujours"—which means that Blanc wins sometimes, red sometimes, but white (Blanc) wins all the time.

No Danger of Bankruptcy.

The race course at Sheepshead Bay, largely owned by Vanderbilt, and his New York Central Railroad trains—unless the Interstate Commerce Commission shall get after them too hard—"win all the time," and will keep his pockets full, no matter what happens in France, so that he need not care the snap of his finger whether his horses win on the French turf or not. At the most his racing losses cannot possibly be big enough to embarass him financially, since like Keene, Harry Payne Whitney, and August Belmont, "at home," he never bets to any extent worth mentioning. But it is said that he does care a lot—that he is pretty sore over the failure of his stable to cut much ice this year.

It should be understood, however, that Vanderbilt stands very high as a racing man in France, notwithstanding his rather poor luck this season. There was a time, before his horses began to win, when Frenchmen refused to take him any more seriously than they take most Americans, whether rich or otherwise, but now "it is different." His costly breeding farm has not turned out any great horses as yet, but his Prestige carries an unbeaten certificate, despite his breakdown, and had beaten the best French horses before being withdrawn because of lameness.

Winners in His String.

The last time Prestige ran, in 1906, he was so much of a favorite that there was no betting against him, and the money wagered upon him at the booths was returned after the race was over. Vanderbilt's Maintenon has the distinction of having won the largest amount of stake money won by any one colt since racing began in France—950,000 francs, or $190,000, last year as a three-year-old, and this season as a four-year-old. He began this season in fine form, winning the Prix Eugene Adam—50,000 francs—and several other events, but then went lame.

Neither of these fine stallions has lost his value, however. Both have been sent to the Vanderbilt breeding farm at Villebon, where it is hoped they will beget colts and fillies worthy of their sires that shall win innumerable races for the only Vanderbilt turf devotee. "Willie K." has spent much money at Villebon, maintaining 100 high-bred brood mares there.

In France, as in America, "Willie K." has the name of getting more real fun out of racing than any other rich man alive, and of taking defeat with the same smile with which he welcomes victory. It isn't supposed that he knows as much about horses as the men he hires, and it is true that he is vastly better at railroading—which he hates—than at horsemanship, which he admires so much. But he knows how to select good horsemen as well as expert railroad men, and, perhaps, one day he may realize his ambition to stand at the head of the French turf. He is the only American, probably, who could be a member of the French Jockey Club if he chose, which he doesn't.

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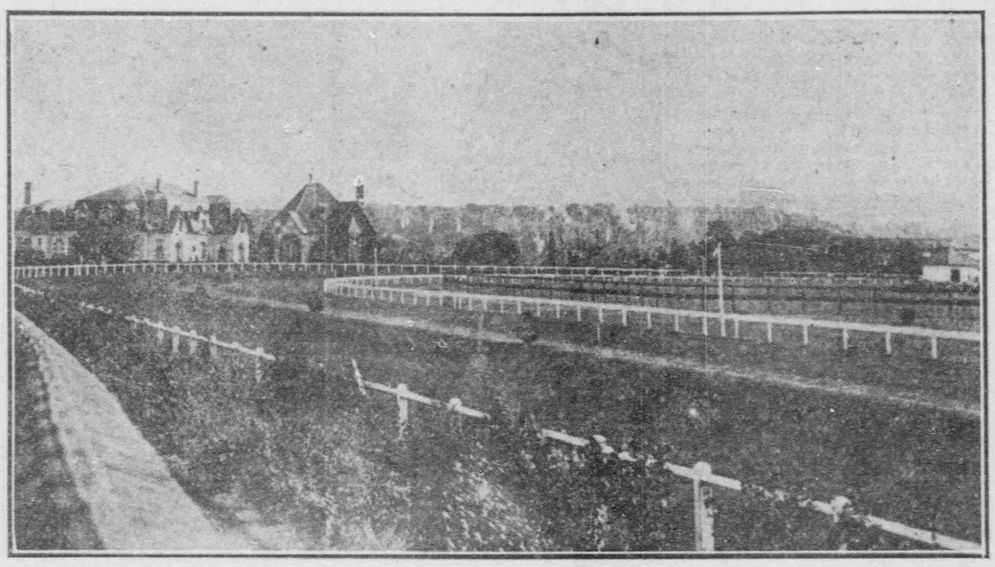
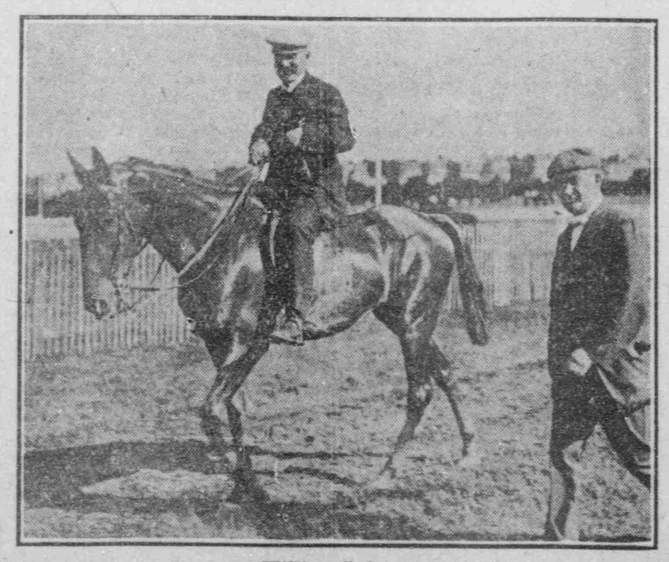
VIEW OF VANDERBILT'S TRAINING FARM.



Inside the high wall at Poissy-on-Seine, showing double race course and new chateau.

Jockey Bellhouse,
Vanderbilt's English Rider.



William Duke,
Vanderbilt's Trainer at the Deauville Track.

RESULT OF TWO-CENT FARE.

Ohio Railroads Doing Larger Business Under New Law.

From the Boston Transcript.

The Ohio Railroad Commission has been studying the effect of the 2 cents a mile rate on the revenues of the railroads of that State and finds that as a whole they have made money under its operation. A group of ten short roads of limited passenger facilities report losses amounting to about $56,000, but the other lines report an increase of $1,332,282 for the fiscal year ending June 30. Considering the volume of the passenger business of the Ohio railroads the increase is small, but its existence proves that those managers who prophesied that the 2-cent rate could not be maintained without inflicting losses on the whole system were mistaken. More people have "ridden on the cars" simply because more have been able to afford it. In one respect Ohio is better adapted to the success of the experiment than many of the States which have decreed that railroads shall carry people for 2 cents a mile without regard to profit or loss. Ohio claims 102 inhabitants to the square mile, and with comparatively few regions that do not contribute passenger business. It has at least four cities of more than 100,000 inhabitants, which means considerable suburban business.

States with a sparse population would do well to remember that they are without the one condition which has prevented Ohio's rate from being confiscatory, but in these days of frenzied regulation this consideration is not likely to exert much influence. The 2-cent rate has gone into effect in Kansas this week, and three of the great systems have given prompt obedience to it, while the others will generally follow suit rather than force a collision with public opinion. Kansas had in 1900 only 18 inhabitants to the square mile, and no city of 60,000 population, hence its law may have results very different from those of the Ohio statute. Three cents a mile has hitherto been the prevailing Kansas rate.

DEMOCRACY OF OWNERSHIP.

But an Oligarchy of Control in Corporate Undertakings.

From the Wall Street Journal.

The government of American commerce is a democracy of ownership and an oligarchy of control. The great problem of to-day is how to lessen the power of the oligarchy by increasing the interest, the power, and the sense of responsibility of the democracy.

Put this thought into other words. It appears that the ownership of the American corporations is widespread. Literally millions of our people are stockholders in them, and even more millions are indirectly partners in their profits through the insurance companies and savings banks. But the majority of stockholders exercise little or no power of control. They are quite content to receive their dividends and say nothing. They are like the citizen who is content to take whatever government is provided for him by nation, State, or city, and never goes to the polls to cast a vote for better conditions.

The great corporations are managed by directors nominally elected by stockholders, although in reality representing in general some one aggressive interest which is able to control the annual elections by means of proxies, just as the practical politician is able ordinarily to run the primaries and conventions.

In the main, these directors are able, honest administrators who conduct the affairs of the companies in the best interest of the stockholders. Sometimes, however, the directors are more concerned in making speculative profits for themselves that in establishing dividends for the stockholders.

In every board of directors there are two or three men who dominate all the rest. These two or three master spirits are frequently interested in other corporations, and it develops that, by means of directorships, a small group of men are able absolutely to control billions of property of which they actually own only an infinitesimal amount.

By degrees there has grown up an oligarchy of directors—perhaps fifty or seventy-five men all told—who virtually control the $20,000,000,000 of corporate wealth represented in the New York Stock Exchange. This is the oligarchy of capital which makes the financial concentration of to-day appear so dangerous.

Favors the Big Stick.

From the New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Secretary Taft, it is said, was instructed not to broach the matter of a new treaty with the Japanese, but to consider any proposition that might be made to him. It is said he has been approached on the subject by high officials and has already had conferences on the subject and will have an audience with the Emperor. If the change of the attitude of Japan was really caused by the coming cruise of the battle-ship fleet to the Pacific, it simply indicates what has always been known, that those nations will be respected which make themselves respected.

Maria's Midnight Lectures.

LECTURE NO. 9.

"What do I care who won the game! You needn't tell me, Job, that you've been down watching the bulletin in front of The Washington Herald office—the game was over long ago, leastways, unless they've taken to playing by 'lectric light, for here it is nearly 12 o'clock, and me not able to sleep because of my carbuncle. You thought a carbuncle was a musical instrument; well, it isn't, and I wish to goodness you had this one o' mine, maybe you'd stay home nights. I tell you, Job, you just add to my troubles; here's Emily been and put her foot through her best petticoat, and little Haley got into a fight with that Phillips boy next door, and how he's going to Sunday school with a scratch on his nose and a black eye's more'n I can see!

"Who was it won the game? I don't remember which is the Tigers and which is the Cubs, do you? Oh, well, it doesn't matter, I suppose, jest so's they keep their eye on the ball. My, but I'm getting efficient in that baseball slang! Talking about Tigers, Job, I've been reading all about that hunting trip of Mr. Roosevelt's. Seems to be wherever he goes that man's a hero. I read as how just as everybody was all out of meat down at the camp they relied on him, and he goes right out and shoots a deer for the men. I ain't heard that he's got any bear yet, but it ain't because they are no bear, 'cause they said last week that the guides had seven young ones all picked out and penned up for him. I think the reason he ain't shot no bear is because of what Dr. Long said about nature-faking; told him he couldn't have his bear and eat it, too, or something like that—pretty cheeky, I call it. But then the President hadn't oughter to have called him a nature faker; you never can tell what's true and what's not about animals.

"Are you listening, Job? I was saying that truth's stranger than fiction, sometimes; now there's my uncle, Dabney Stoop; I remember onct he was fishing out at Broad Ripple, near Indianapolis, and he caught a turtle, and just for fun he started to cut his name on its shell. He cut the 'D' all right, and had just finished the 'S' when the turtle bit him and he threw it overboard. Next Sunday—he only went fishing on Sundays, he was a paperhanger the rest of the week—he went fishing again, and he caught the same turtle, and on its back was the name Dabney Stoop, all spelled out. I suppose if you'd put that in a book they'd say it was nature faking, but I know it was true, 'cause Uncle Dabney brought the turtle home.

"Did you notice, Job, that the Lucy Tanner has been making more time acrost the ocean? She covered the distance of 3,765 miles, two furlongs, and seventeen feet in four days, sixteen hours, three minutes and a quarter, and the German steamers are just wild about it. Lucy Tanner beat the Dauschund's time, but I don't see how a boat named after one of them squashed-out dogs could run at all fast, do you? But the best thing about the Lucy Tanner's feat—though I don't think it's quite polite to talk about her feet—was, that she made all this time and only fourteen of the stokers went crazy with the heat this time!

"Say, Job, do you notice what's happened to the Peace Conference? Since them baseball games started we ain't heard anything about it, have we; and as for the fighting in Morocco, why there might just as well not be any. Seems to me those European people need some press agents like Mr. Fairbanks has. Why, a mothers' meeting in this country'd get more space in the papers than the Peace Conference's getting.

"I see that a group o' sanitary scientists is going to investigate Pittsburg with a view of getting the place fumigated. I should think it needs it. Why, I read as how a father out there turned his thirty-five-year-old daughter over his knee and gave her a spanking. There's some of those millionaires out there'd be the better for a dose of the same kind, I'm thinking.

"Isn't it wonderful how Mr. Taft's boom seems to be a-booming and he so far away out of the country? Even the Chinese out there are cheering him, though it's pity they ain't got no votes, but I see that Penobscot, Me., and Terre Haute, both have declared for him. What is a straw vote, anyway, Job? I never could understand it, unless it's like the game we used to play when we were kids, pulling straws. If that were so I should think Mr. Fairbanks 'd have the longest straw all the time.

"We got another bill from the oil man this afternoon, Job, and I wish you'd pay it, if not they'll soon be charging interest. The Standard Oil Company's in a bad fix to my way o' thinking. All their money seems to disappear so fast. There's that man S. P. Trainor. The books show that they lent him twenty million dollars, and he says he never got it, and as for that fine of Judge Landis' I haven't heard that anybody's seen anything of that yet. This business of fighting over your house is getting to be terrible, and now I see that the tax assessors are going to sell the gas company's meters for taxes. I think that would be foolish. Who wants to buy a gas meter? I'm sure I don't. The one we've got in the cellar don't belong to us—if it did, what with the way it registers up on us, I'd throw it into the street. If they are a-going to sell 'em I hope they come here and sell ours first. It 'd be a blessing to get it out of the house.

"And you daren't fool with those meters either, no matter how fast they run. I remember Bageley Steffens had a son who was fixing to be an engineer and he was always monkeying with machinery. When their gas meter got out of order young Steffens disconnected the gas pipe and connected it with the water hydrant. Then when he turned on the water it made the meter run backward, and in about an hour, according to the meter's registration, it had gone so far backward that it looked as if the gas company owed the Steffenses about twenty dollars. Bageley thought it was so smart he went down to the office and tried to collect it; he'd forgotten that the gas company and the water company was in cahoots together, and after they investigated the problem they wanted to charge him so much for extra water used that he had to put a mortgage on his barn. I tell you, you've got to get up early to beat a gas company.

"Did you notice about another of them New York girls getting married to an English lord? I think it's plumb silly, don't you? If our little Emily gets over the mumps all right and her hair comes back in where it fell out after the scarlet fever, and them freckles she has don't stay with her when she's growed up, I expect she'll be a right pretty girl. But I'll bet you she don't marry none of them English lords with their la-de-dah ways, and there is not one of 'em that's got a trade. I hope Emily takes after little Haley; that child's too smart for any use. He wrote a real historical poem at school to-day and teacher sent it home to me. It goes:

> Oh, when the flags was flying,
> We licked the British lion;
> We licked 'em—we licked 'em,

"Well, that's all I can remember of it, but it was just great, Job, and I hope you'll remember to bring Haley home a sack of peanut candy—that's the kind I like best myself; and law knows, I a'int had a taste o' candy for ever so long.

"You know, Job, that I don't hold with you a-violating the confidence of the nuptial chamber, as they call it, and telling what I have to say about affairs to The Washington Herald, but if you had to do it I'm glad it's The Herald. I see it celebrated its first birthday last week and was as proud as Punch about it, too, like everybody is about their first baby a year old. Do you remember when little Haley had his first birthday? You invited Mort Woods down to help you celebrate and you had such a headache the next morning I had to use all the ice in the icebox on your head and my butter all got spoiled. Oh, but you've been a reckles man, Job!

"What are you yawning about, Job? Want to go to sleep! I wisht to heaven you'd get some intelligence, Job. But it's always the way whenever I try to improve your mind by keeping you up to date about the large affairs of the world, you get sleepy. I see they've arranged to have another performance of the Thaw trial in December, just to make the Christmas holidays bright, I suppose. They are only going to call 364 experts this time, and if they can't prove Thaw insane, why, nobody can. I only hope you won't spend your nights as you did before, reading all that stuff. It ain't literature, Job, and you'd be much better improving your mind with Ella Wheeler Wilcox or Betty Bradeen.

"I haven't heard much about the American fleet recently—have you?—excepting that another ship went ashore somewhere. I expect they just did it for advertising; perhaps Secretary Metcalf thinks people ought to pay more attention to him. I can't make head or tail out of this suit against Secretary Metcalf, can you? Seems to me like they wouldn't let him in some of the New York theaters, and he sued 'em and lost the suit. I'd heard there was some complaint about sailors in uniform going into public places, but I had no idea it extended to the Secretary of the Navy. Not him? Another Metcalf! Oh, well, what does it matter? He was kept out of the theaters, anyway. By the by, talking about sailors and ships and things, I hear that the American merchant marine is showing a decided increase—that's what the papers say. I suppose they've built a couple more bugeyes and a tugboat on the Potomac.

"I expect we'll hear something startling in financial circles pretty soon. I see that Mr. Fish has started off to Chicago looking for Mr. Harriman. I hope it won't cause another panic if he finds him, don't you, Job? Every time they have a panic, prices go up, and Emily's just got to have some new clothes this winter; her stockings are all getting too small for her, poor child. And groceries are getting dearer, too, all except those patent breakfast foods; and little Haley got a mouthful of one of them the other morning and like to have choked to death before I could brush it out—I had to take a whisk broom to the stuff. And I notice now that there's to be a combine of tabasco-sauce makers, so the price of that hot stuff will go up, too. Not that I care about it. I've never tried it since the night your brother Dick was here on a visit and put about a teaspoonful of it on an oyster and it burned him so that he bit the oyster shell in half and ruined his teeth.

"Job! Job! Is that a light down stairs? Did you leave the gas burning in the front parlor? No; you know you are not asleep; go down and turn it out. Don't pretend to snore now. Oh, what brutes you men are. I suppose I'll have to go down myself, and maybe there's burglars, too—where in the world are my slippers?"

Immigration and Labor Market.

From the Baltimore News.

For one thing, immigration furnishes a migratory labor supply, coming when it is wanted and going when it is not wanted. This feature of the situation is becoming more and more marked. In times of business retrenchment and slackening of industrial activity there is a great ebb in the tide of immigration. Outgoing vessels carry loads of steerage passengers, who are going back to their own country because employment in this country has ceased to be brisk. This gives the labor market an elasticity which it does not possess in European countries, where dull times throw upon the community a mass of unemployed, whose condition is an acutely distressing social problem. This situation periodically occurs in England, while our country is less exposed to it than any other.

Balm for Some Railroads.

From the Boston Herald.

President Hill's despair over the desperate plight of the railroads continues to be relieved by extra dividends. They are a great balm for the oppressed.